



DSC Divorce and Separation Mediation Policies and Procedures

Intake process & forms: When DSC receives a divorce or separation inquiry, the first step is for the clients to complete our online paperwork packet, and to watch our orientation video. Each party in a separating couple will have 2 weeks to send back all required forms and confirmation of having watched our orientation video. Once *both* clients have returned all their forms, DSC will schedule an intake phone conversation with each party. Intake calls are scheduled for up to 30 minutes and are an opportunity for clients to ask questions and to clarify any issues before the mediation process begins.

Number of sessions: Some couples only mediate one or two times, but many couples mediate more. After the first three mediation sessions, DSC staff and mediators will evaluate whether more sessions are appropriate. At the discretion of DSC staff and mediators, parties may schedule up to 3 more sessions. In rare cases, it may be necessary for parties to mediate more than six times.

Role of mediators: Mediators act as neutral facilitators to guide the conversation and help parties work through difficult topics. Mediators do not represent either party, may not provide legal advice, nor are they in the role of a therapist. Mediation is a confidential process. The mediators may close a case at any point if.

Communication expectations: DSC primarily communicates with clients via email, with the expectation that parties will respond within 2 business days. If parties do not respond to emails within a reasonable time frame, we will assume you are no longer interested in mediation and close your case.

Scheduling and payments: Once the mediation is scheduled, DSC will email a reminder prior to the session. Payment is expected prior to each mediation session.

Cancellation policy: Our mediators reserve this time especially for you. If you must cancel, please do so at least 48 hours in advance of your mediation. If clients fail to cancel within 48 hours of the mediation session, that party will be assessed a \$50 cancellation fee which must be paid prior to the next session. If both parties decide to cancel the mediation without providing 48-hour notice, both parties will be charged the cancellation fee,

Closing case and survey: The goal of mediation is to reach agreements on key issues. Once those agreements have been made, the case will be closed. At the close of the case, DSC will provide parties with a copy of the summary notes and survey.